GNSO Working Group Newcomer Open House session
TRANSCRIPTION
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Nathalie Peregrine: Good afternoon, good evening everybody and welcome to the GNSO

Working Group Newcomer Open House session on the 7th of August, 2014.

On the call today we have Avri Doria, Dan Rogers, Jay Chapman and Susan Payne. From staff we have Mary Wong, Glen de Saint Géry, and myself, Nathalie Peregrine.

I'd like to remind you all to please state your names before speaking for transcription purposes. Thank you very much and over to you, Mary.

Mary Wong: Thank you, Nathalie, and hello everybody. As Nathalie says, I'm Mary Wong, also a member of ICANN staff. I'd like to welcome you all to the Generic Name Supporting Organization, or GNSO, Working Group Newcomer Open House Session.

Although we have the Adobe Connect room and the phone bridge, which Nathalie will speak a little bit about later, and we do have therefore some slides, we'd like to encourage you, especially as we have a relatively nice and small group today, to take this as an interactive session and to stop the

presenters at any time with questions or clarifications because that will make for a better more informative experience for all.

Before I hand over to our speaker today, Avri Doria, I'd like to say a couple of words about the team that you will be working with from the Policy Development side of ICANN.

I'd like to thank, Avri, actually, for coming on the call, it's morning for her. And some of you may already know Avri. Avri is a former chair of the GNSO Council, she's a current councilor representing the Non Commercial Stakeholder Group and Avri is a veteran of working groups so she is the ideal presenter for us, thanks very much, Avri.

You may have heard some of us on the phone. You may have been bugged by emails from some of us but if you've been to an ICANN meeting you may have met some of us. But if you've not hopefully we'll have the chance to meet you in person somewhere sometime soon.

So here are some photos to help you recognize us. David Olive is the Vice President of our team and he is primarily located in Istanbul in Turkey. The team leader for the GNSO, and a senior policy director, is Marika Konings from Belgium. Many of you in your first interactions with us may have come through Glen de Saint Géry who is on the call today, hello Glen, and she is located in France.

For any matters to deal with secretariat or administrative issues Glen is usually your go-to person but Nathalie is someone that will also fulfill that function as you will see.

That's me. And although I'm originally from Singapore I am now primarily located in the United States. There's Julie Hedlund and Lars. Julie is in DC and Lars is in Belgium in the Brussels office with Marika.

Some of you may also be working with Berry who is a consultant to ICANN and he is located in the United States. And definitely, not least, Nathalie, I think I'm going to hand it back to you at this point for you to take us through the mechanics of working group calls.

And so over - back to you.

Nathalie Peregrine: Thank you very much, Mary. Hello, everyone. This is Nathalie from staff. So it was just to give you a quick overview of the Adobe Connect room and before you actually launch yourself into more content-related details. So you've all made it into the Adobe Connect room so, well done, that's a first step. You might have realized when you log in that you have the option to log in as host or as guest. So please don't worry about the host option here, it concerns staff only so you all did the right thing and just logging in as guest.

I would advise you when are you logging in for - onto working group calls if you use your first and last name. We do mark attendance during the working group calls and it is handy it's a numerous group that you, you know, if you raise your hand, for instance, the chair knows which (unintelligible) that he's going to hand the floor over to so please do that on working groups.

Next - another feature we have, that you may not be familiar with is the audio connect in the Adobe room. So whilst a few of you have connected on the audio bridge that means by using your phone and dialing through to an operator and giving, in this case, the password, Welcome, you also have the option to use voice over IP here.

So what you need to do is for each individual session and it's not as annoying as it sounds, is to click on the telephone icon at the top of your toolbar. Once you've clicked on this you follow all the instructions. And if you have activated your audio successfully the telephone icon will turn into a microphone icon.

This means that your laptop or computer microphone is going to be broadcasting. Because of this you will need to know how to mute and unmute. So to do this you will click on the right hand white arrow you can see either to the - right of the telephone icon or the microphone icon. Using that dropdown will allow you to mute or unmute.

Muting, as you can see now, on (Susan)'s attendance line, for example, in the Adobe Connect room, shows a red bar across the microphone. That means it's successfully muted.

It's extremely handy to do this especially if you're also connected on the phone line as we do get a lot of feedback from microphones in the Adobe Connect room so please be careful with this.

The other feature you all know is the Adobe Connect chat. We've been - a few of us have been writing in it already. One thing you might not be aware of is that these chats are archived in the same way as all our sessions are recorded and transcribed we also keep a record of the Adobe Connect chat.

By record I mean that we only keep the public chat so the one we see now. If you were to want to ask me a question, for example, regarding a dial-out request or a technical issue you might be having and you would have private chatted with me this will of course not be archived, only the public ones are.

To private chat someone you just need to highlight their name in the list of attendees and you'll have the option to private chat with them. This remains completely confidential of course.

Another way to communicate during working group session is to ask to speak during the call. To do this within most of the GNSO working groups there's a procedure of raising one hand to let the chair know that you're willing to comment on something or ask a question.

Please bear in mind that raising your hand does not automatically give you the right to speak and for this you must wait your turn until the chair calls you out by name. So to raise your hand at the top of the Adobe Connect room you can see a convenient little ICANN, icon, sorry, slip of the tongue, where a hand raised.

If you click on this you will be able to raise your hand. This then alerts the chair that you're in the queue for question or comment. Once you have asked your question or commented please remember to lower your hand as otherwise this alerts the chair to the fact you might be wanting to comment further. So it's just a - it's a little trick to remember.

What you can also do to comment without asking for your turn here is to use the emoticons you've got on the same drop down menu from the raising hands. If you click again on this you'll see, for example, you have a green tick and a red cross. These are frequently used during working group sessions to just show support or on the contrary objection to what's being said.

It allows also the chair for instant to poll the group rapidly on something, for example, the date of the next meeting on a holiday date, do you agree or not rather than typing frantically in the chat you'd be able to use this emoticon to show agreement or disapproval.

Just to make sure I haven't bored you to tears and you've all been keeping up would you mind using the emoticons just mentioned to show approval or disapproval of the AC room? Oh I like the improvisation, (Jay), thank you ever so much. Okay we have a very attentive participation today. Thank you for this.

And if you do have any questions please don't hesitate to type them in the chat. I don't think this is beyond anyone's comprehension however so I'll have only handed back to Mary, thank you.

Mary Wong: Thank you, Nathalie. And for a moment there I committed the very common mistake of starting to speak while I was still in mute and hopefully we don't do that too often.

So as you see here, and as I said earlier, we want to be flexible and we'd like to have a more interactive discussion because for each of you, you may have different levels of involvement in working groups as well as with ICANN and you may well have questions that Avri or I would not be covering specifically or that maybe even aren't on the slides so again please feel free to jump in, do any of the things Natalie just indicated on Adobe and we will be happy to take your question and do a discussion.

So here are just some questions that we thought are somewhat standard questions regarding specifically and particularly how policy is made in the GNSO as everybody knows, ICANN prides itself on being a bottom up multistakeholder consensus-based organization.

And in the area of policy development concerning generic names that's probably the key most critical component. In that regard, besides the process that's used, there's a couple of other things that have been developed to try to facilitate that model of decision-making so Avri was the little bit as to what folks mean when they need about the picket fence and why Consensus Policy, capital C, capital P, is such an important doctrine in ICANN and go through a little bit of the guidelines that apply to any working group that you may have joined or that you may well be joining.

So without further ado I'd like to hand over to our speaker, Avri.

Avri Doria: Thank you. Yeah, I really like the buttons, I really liked the introduction on how to use all of that. One of my favorite things to try and do in some meetings is to see if I can make it all the way through the meeting without uttering a word and just using the chat and the various buttons.

So in talking about the policy development process, let me go on to the next slide, there is a lovely track of it here. And it really is a fully developed process with many steps and many places for the community to interact with it and actually constantly sort of looking at more - at enriching those comments opportunities.

So it starts out with an issues report. An issues report is basically a report produced by the staff that basically reviews the issue in depth in terms of its legal implications, in terms of policy implications, if there are any technical issues that need to be looked at. Basically tries to take a full rounded view of the issue, present that issue to the community, and the GNSO, the GNSO Council specifically and also makes a recommendation on whether the policy would be in scope for the GNSO.

So first a publication of a preliminary one comes out, so even in the issues report there is a chance to sort of say wait a second, you haven't brought up the issue of privacy, you haven't brought up the issue of intellectual property in this context or to say yes, I think you've covered it all and I think that, you know.

So basically before that issues report becomes finalized, before a process starts the community members, and this is open to all community members and even those that have never been to an ICANN meeting, and basically say you haven't gotten - so the comments are gathered and then the staff updates this for final issues report that is the first document into any development process that may or may not - it's sort of a foundational document.

Then the GNSO Council basically has - takes a vote on starting that. Before they take a vote most of the councilors do consult with the stakeholder groups and constituencies they come from to get their views.

Each of those stakeholder groups and constituencies is a bottom-up organization so they are all organized differently and they make their own decisions and their own motivations of their councilors in different ways but they come together in the Council and the Council is one place where votes are taken. There are certain thresholds that a Council vote has to meet.

There is one low threshold to start a process if this staff has defined it as in scope. There's another higher threshold to meet if the staff has decided it's out of scope. So even then we are seeing that it really is a cooperative, this staff may say it's not in scope but if the GNSO Council decides this is something they really need to do they can go forward with it anyhow, that relationship is one of give and take.

The working group was formed. Part of initiating the development process also includes doing a charter for the group. They working group is formed then they go to all that constituencies, all the other advisory committees, supporting organizations and basically ask for statements related to the issue under discussion.

So that then joins the issues report as part of the base material that the group uses. Working group talks, working group works, working group meets, it produces an initial report. Again it goes out for comments. The community at large, ICANN and beyond, is asked to read it then comment.

And then the comments come back, the group works, there's a very detailed process where staff takes each of the comments, breaks it down into its individual statements and then basically the working group over a course of weeks and sometimes longer, goes through each and every comment, looks at it, makes a decision; is this something we are to covered and we need to make clearer?

Is this something that we think is out of scope? Is this the change we want to make? This is a change we've considered but don't want to make and why

and basically all of that discussion gets recorded and becomes part of the history of the project that is archived. Great stuff for scholars that ever want to go back and look at anything.

Then it's sent to the GNSO Council who discusses it, who can look at it and say, oops, did you cover or we don't quite understand yet. So they can send things back to the working group and sort of say, you know, please look at, please consider. The GNSO Council's deliberations are primarily on whether the practices were met correctly, whether the process was gone through completely.

But there are also considerations of fact within the Council and such because they do have constituencies behind them that may have strong opinions that need to be expressed.

After that if the Council deliberates, if it's approved, it essentially is a recommendation to the Board. The Board then goes out for comments. So, see, there are really, you know, many places where comments can go. The Board comes out for comments saying, "What do you think of this GNSO recommendation?"

At the same time the Board is getting input from the advisory committees, like the Government Advisory Committee, GAC, or the At Large Advisory Committee, ALAC, or the Security and Stability Advisory Committee, SSAC.

And they gather all those. They can basically send things back to the GNSO before doing their approval saying we don't understand, we think a rework, etcetera. So there is a whole loopback there for clarifications or, you know, currently we're looking at processes to deal with, if an advisory committee comes up with something that the Board is not sure has been adequately covered then they can send it back.

The Board votes and then it goes to staff for implementation at which point there's still a possibility of involvement from the policy process because in implementation there are always, you know, interpretive issues of well do the policy really mean, and does this implementation match the policy?

So the working group and the GNSO Council has the ability to form an implementation review team - it's optional, it's not required in all cases - that basically works with the staff and the implementation team specifically to make sure that there's a common understanding going forward.

So, that's that one. I should stop to breathe and give people a chance to raise a hand. And please, those of you that are running this, if I'm spending too long on the page tell me to speed up. I see no hands, I'll proceed.

So the working group requirement, they get the constituency/stakeholder groups statements, they formally seek the opinion of other ICANN advisory committees. The development of initial reports and public comments, review the comments, final report. Those are the essential stages as I mentioned. I have this bad habit of talking about what's on next slide and forgive me.

So there's further reading on that. The bylaws are really quite specific. Also the PDP manual and the PDP overview get down into the nitty-gritty of almost all these issues, how they work, why they work, you know, for you trying to achieve in various stages, how do you set up a working group etcetera.

Questions? Okay, consensus policy and the picket fence. One of the things that does get confusing to people is - and even people that have been around for a long time sometimes, our consensus policy and picket fence.

Consensus policy, basically the way the contracts are worked out is first of all there are contracts between registrars and ICANN and between the registries and ICANN. And these define the roles and responsibilities of that registrars

and registries. It is a contractual thing. It can be enforced as any contractual law. ICANN has compliance groups that basically work with that.

Consensus policy is a way to bind those registrars and registries who are under contract to new policies that have not necessarily been set at the time they signed the contract. This is actually a sort of - I don't know how novel it is, I'm not the contract lawyer, but it's certainly something I haven't encountered in other places where the registrars and registries have contracts and as contracts established material conditions under which the registrars and registries are bound.

But ICANN policy mechanism can reach into those contracts and change some of those conditions, the set of things that they can change is very limited and they are limited by what's called the picket fence. And we'll get to that.

So when the contracts or agreed to part of the contract is that they agreed to be subject to these consensus policies. There are three conditions on which that is reached.

Issues we should be uniform for coordinated resolution is reasonably necessary to facilitate interoperability, technical reliability or stable operation of the Internet domain name system. So basically it's something that's important enough that every contracted registrar or every contracted registry needs to do for the well-being of the system.

Other ones are registry and registrar policies reasonably necessary to implement consensus policies relating to registrars and registries. Obviously we're dealing with their contracts so it's their behaviors.

And to deal with resolution of disputes regarding registration of domain names as opposed to the use of them. One of the things that ICANN tries to

be very careful of is avoid making policies related to content. So these details on the consensus policies are part of the contracts.

The picket fence, basically the policy that is made on these particular issues is sort of isolated from the other part of the contract. One of the nice things about the picket fence is it gets seen from perspectives. From one perspective it marks - it's a line of demarcation of what policy can not effect, so what is outside the picket fence.

And it's also a demarcation of those things that can be changed. And there's a very clear line of delineation and there's rarely, in my 10 years of being part of the GNSO process, I can remember innumerable disagreements and discussions about every topic under the sun except was something in or out of the picket fence.

We rarely end up talking about that because it's a nice white picket fence and we mostly recognize it and see where it is. Of course I'm speaking literally - not literally, metaphorically literally.

Anyway so on issues - so that doesn't mean that ICANN can't create other policies that are outside of the picket fence but those policies are not contractually mandated, only the policies within it are.

Okay we got further reading on consensus policy. Any questions on that at this point? Okay. I've either explained it clearly or I've so confused the topic you don't know what to ask.

Working Group Guidelines, working groups are the sort of central base of where policy is developed. That part of ICANN calling itself a bottom-up organization means that not only in the stakeholders and constituencies do they self-define themselves but in terms of creating policy the policy basically starts from a discussion of all the stakeholders.

So the objectives of working group guidelines is assist working groups to do it. Now it's - in - when working groups first started each working group was basically developing its own methods of working, it's own - and this was essentially confusing for the participants because they'd be in one working group under one set of rules and they'd be in another working group and another. So basically an effort was put together to produce these guidelines.

Now they are just guidelines which means the Council or indeed the working group itself, with the approval of the Council, can change the way a particular working group functions if, for example, it was the kind of issue that needed a different approach than the standard. So they are guidelines but they are guidelines that help all working groups work in a similar way.

So they discuss things like, you know, the first meeting, the roles and responsibilities of members of the working groups, you know, and there are various roles, there's a chair, there's a liaison between the Council and the working group and then the members themselves have various responsibilities to the group.

Use of sub teams, briefings, subject matter experts are all defined. If you want to do this then here's a guideline for how you can do it. And the staff is geared up - when you ask the staff for something that's within a guideline it's obviously much easier for them to help than when you ask for them to invent a new process. They will if asked, however, it's a much harder task, it slows down processes, etcetera. But when necessary it's necessary.

There is notions on participation and the meaning of representativeness in the groups. There's process and norms and behaviors. There's methodology for making decisions. Decisions are made by, you know, consensus which is - and there's definitions of what's full consensus, what's ICANN consensus, what - and then defining some lower things where there's split opinions, where there's support but strong opposition and where, you know, there really is no consensus.

So those are defined to help the chairs in making the calls. But it's the community and chairs together that determine when the consensus point is reached.

There's an appeals process if any member of a group feels that a chair or the group in some other way is not working correctly there's a process that's (unintelligible) to be followed that works with talking to the chair, getting the liaison involved, you know, getting the Council involved if absolutely necessary and an escalation process.

There is various tools that are available, Adobe Connect being one of them. Other communication tools, a wiki, is kept on every working group. And sometimes other tools are used as well and then basically defining the various products and outputs that a group needs to come out with.

So the guidelines are really - and they're in a separate section of the Guidebooks so basically they can be pulled out, you can basically put the purpose and milestones and such of a group and you can almost start running without worrying about spending weeks and weeks and weeks discussing process issues at the beginning of a group. You can just get down into the issue at hand.

So as I mentioned, the decision making it outlines available designations and those are formal. The chair is responsible for determining it but it's an iterative process. For example, when I've been chair of groups I would look at it and say, it looks to me like we have consensus on Point 1, you know, and then I basically would announce that to the group. And a couple people, you know, raise their hands on email or in a session and say, "No we don't. You know, we have not dealt with A, B and C." At which point I go, okay well then let's deal with A, B and C. And we go through that. And then we go through it.

Now at a certain point, you know, the whole group says, "Wait a second, no, we have talked about A, B and C. We're still in disagreement. We understand your point." And you find even people that are opposition to the point can explain it quite clearly. That's when you know a point has been gotten through. "But we still don't agree with you."

And at which point that's when you basically start to do the designation. Do we have full consensus? Did everybody absolutely agree? Did we have consensus which means for the most part people agreed, there were maybe one or two opinions that were discussed, understood, but they were minority positions.

Now a minority position can - should - can and should always be documented and that gets attached to the decision. So when you call a consensus without full consensus those who are not within the consensus are allowed to record their viewpoint, attach it to the recommendations and it goes forward through the whole process.

So that minority opinion is not in any way suppressed or lost, it stays there. Now that won't necessarily motivate, you know, a change but sometimes it gives you cred to go, "I told you so."

You know, there's strong support but significant opposition, that's even more cause for the various viewpoints getting well documented. Divergence, minority views. And there's further reading on that one.

Any questions? Tips and tricks. I don't know, do you want me to talk to this one or - okay.

Mary Wong: That's totally up to you, Avri.

Avri Doria: Okay. There's a bunch of good stuff. You know, there's the Webpage, GNSO ICANN.org. It's useful. It's extremely useful in terms of having a calendar so

whatever you forget which meetings you have today you can go there and it'll be what meetings you're missing. Happens to me all the time.

It gives - you can also go and review the core materials on the operating procedures, on Working Group Guidelines, the PDP manual, those are all contained in Council procedures. There's the GNSO 101 materials, which cover basics; a lot of what we've talked about, probably a lot I haven't touched on.

And please, Mary, if there are issues that in my glide-through here I should have mentioned that I didn't same for you, Nathalie and Glen, please tell me because I'm just looking at the slides and talking. And then there's a review of the current GNSO project.

Now that one is very useful especially for someone who would like to get involved because you can look at those reviews, it tells you what states they're in, it gives you all the, you know, the documents that you would have to read.

One of the guidelines for participants is you have to keep up with the work, you have to do the reading. If you miss a call there's really an expectation that you would listen to the recording of the call hopefully before the next

meeting, that you follow the email lists et cetera.

There's no real obligation that you have to talk there's more of an obligation to be up to date and follow especially if you are going to talk. So now looking at the GNSO projects it basically gives you a view of where they are and what their material is.

So there's no rule against in fact very often it's encouraged because, you know, more opinion helps to join a working group that is in progress. However there's an ask there's a request of anybody that does that and that before starting to, you know, participate actively to voice your opinions and such you take the time to read everything that's gone before.

That you read through the lists, that you listen through the calls and read the documentation. So its' as if you were there from the beginning you just, you know, obviously didn't speak until you've gotten to the point of catching up. So that no one comes into a working group and starts to rehash all the issues that have been discussed. Now of course if while you're reviewing all this stuff you go through and say wait a second when they talked about A they missed the issue of A prime.

And you've read through it and you see that A prime never came up for discussion and nobody brought it up. In that case it's fine to, you know, talk to the chair about ways to bring a prime in, bring it into the list and sort of say hey I'm new I've read the list and I didn't see any mention of A prime, you know, can anybody tell me was this discussed perhaps, you know, offline, off list et cetera or this is an issue that still needs discussing.

So it's not that you can't bring up something new because of the history but it needs to be in the context of what was done. Okay anything, questions on that I still see no hands no one is practicing their hands in the talking part.

Okay, then there's acronym helpers there's a couple of them the GNSO home page is a very good one for ICANN specific. There are also a couple others the actually I don't remember off the top of my head I don't know if it's referred to on the GSNO home, it's the (Andalucia) one, which goes much broader than just ICANN for acronyms, pertinent to the Internet echo system and so on.

It also goes wider, it has a specialized ICANN section that goes wider than the GNSO in terms of capturing all of ICANN. There's the GNSO Wiki's lots of stuff to read on them, there's the ICANN learn where basically over the last I guess it's two years ICANN staff working with a cross community group on education and an outside vendor of online education materials has been producing various learning pods that are open and free and anyone that's new to ICANN is encouraged to go look at.

Find the one that talks about something you wanted to know about and go through it and because these are all new, you know, be sure to comment on how you thought they could be improved if indeed you feel they can be improved.

One of the best ways to get involved is to find an experienced working group member either from your grouping or from, you know, some other grouping and ask them to help. Most of us are pretty willing to help some of us have better user interfaces than others but we're all really nice and we all really like to help.

And then of course the GNSO policy staff the one whose pictures you saw at the beginning of this presentation are really helpful and always willing to lend a hand to point you in the direction. I still go to my favorite staff people all the time and say can you tell me where the information on this is.

And, you know, they very patiently tell me where on the Web site I can go find it. Finding your way around the Web site is a learned art. So let me see is there another one? No just for (map). So again I'm going to stop and ask for questions or ask the staff members is there anything I didn't cover that I should cover, yes Mary I see your hand please.

Mary Wong: Yes this is Mary from ICANN staff I was practicing my hand raising right there but, you know, while folks are thinking about questions and I see Susan is starting to type in the chat.

I was wondering since you're a veteran of both the council and working groups and I think you've chaired a number in your time do you remember any particular experiences that, you know, could help folks find their way around or just tips, you know, beyond the materials that we have.

And I ask this knowing that our material can be quite overwhelming just by sheer volume and also in terms of human dynamics it's a little daunting to come into a meeting especially an online meeting where you may not have met most of the people and folks may be arguing over some arcane point or procedure or some old history.

I mean I know you've seen that happen and I hate to put you on the spot but do you have any sort of sense of how people might be able to deal with that sort of thing.

Avri Doria: Okay and what you neglected to mention is sometimes I'm part of those arcane discussions over some past bit of history and those conversations that while they never rise to the level of shouting to each other often do seem rather stressful to those that aren't used to such rough manners.

ICANN works very hard to get us to behave like polite individuals but sometimes we do get exuberant. And basically what I recommend is just sit back and watch it, don't worry about it, don't try to jump into the middle of it unless, you know, you really know what you're about and what the subject is about and you're one of those brave people that jumps into the middle of things.

But by and large you need to understand that the people are all friends they go out and drink with each other and whether it's coffee or alcohol, after the meetings they eat with each other, they go touring around the various places we have meetings together, you know, the day after the meetings are over most people haven't a chance to tour during the meetings.

So that would be the first thing I'd point out is when you see those stressful moments within an ICANN working group put it down to passion and not to angry personality. As I say not all of us have the best user interface and not all of us have the best user interface at all times.

In terms of getting involved what I recommend to people personally and I recommend to people within the NCSG is to just find a working group that is of interest to you, join it and then sit and watch while catching up basically.

And then find someone that you trust, you know, you can always come to someone like me or the other people, I'm always willing to answer questions and I'm always on Skype. Not necessarily answering immediately but within a reasonable amount of time.

But you'll also as I say if you're in a stakeholder group or constituency you can ask one of them but really instead of standing on, you know, the outside wondering what it's like or just reading an archive get involved in the group in a passive way until you feel ready.

And really sort of say, you know, you don't have to also read every message you'll find in time mailers that have these threading they're very useful. In terms of the amount of mail you can get from a group sometimes people feel like it's a fire hose of information coming at them when they join a working group.

Use the filtering capabilities of your email tool to filter it into a mailbox that you only go into when you're ready to be confused and to work on finding your way through. Admittedly it is confused for people who are brand new to ICANN it seems to take anywhere from, you know, three to four months to find your feet to a year or more.

It's up to individual styles, it's up to individuals comfort with discomfort, you know, some of us are incredibly comfortable being in the middle of a room where we're picking up on what's going up around us but we're lost.

Other people really need to have a strong foundation and a strong footing, you know, to feel comfortable and do not feel comfortable on the tight rope, you know, basically adjust your participation to your style.

And really mostly just don't fret to much over it I've had numerable people that have sent me messages before they sent their first message to a list both in ICANN and the Internet engineering task force where I'm also involved.

Asking me to read it and tell them whether, you know, they were going to get beat up. Now first of all they probably wouldn't be beat up but if you have that feeling that you would like someone to sort of check over your first note before you get comfortable, find someone you're comfortable with and ask them.

You know, you'll get instant feedback from most people and it helps you with, you know, dipping your toe into the waters. Mary I don't know if that covered what you were looking for me to cover or went off in some stray direction but re-direct me if I need re-direction.

Mary Wong: Not at all.

Avri Doria: I saw a Dan hand - I saw a Dan hand at one point but it went away.

Mary Wong: And while Dan may be putting his hand up again Avri I think your initial response was great I mean it is exactly what I would have agreed with being a former participant from the community before joining staff.
                     It seems like it might also be a nice segue into Susan's question. I think you touched on some aspects of it. I think the one aspect that maybe you could spend a couple of minutes on is the last bit of her question with regards to

participating on a working group, representing a constituency or group within a gender is that all right and how do you handle that?

Avri Doria: Okay in terms of impartiality let me start there, because we all have to put in a statement of interest and that is one thing I didn't mention is when you join a working group you're requested to put in a statement of interest.

This basically states all the points of view you're coming from, any of the commitments you might have, any of the jobs, are you speaking for anyone and you state that.

Now that is basically what you're expected to do you're coming from a constituency you state the constituency's point of view. It's good to tag things though you'll find a lot of us sort of say, you know, speaking, you know, for myself I believe A, B, C, D.

You know, or at other times, you know, my constituency has really made a strong issue of doing it this way and so both of those are totally acceptable. The requirements impartiality falls on those that take roles like chair, like liaison.

Now that doesn't mean that we still can't speak our minds when we're in those roles but we have to clearly tag it. So if I'm chair and I'm speaking and I'm doing all the chairing stuff and saying, you know, it seems to me that we have a consensus but we don't have a consensus here and there's agreement on A, B, C, D, E and F et cetera.

Then I'm speaking as chair and then I go, you know, but and then what also normally happens I you would see a person put themselves in a queue. They would basically put their hand up and then as they were chairing a meeting they'll say you've noticed I put myself in the queue because I want to make a personal comment.

They'll wait their term in the queue so in my chair role I won't speak my opinion but once we get down to my hand then, you know, and say okay, you know, speaking for myself I think that, you know, when we're considering point F we really have to take into affect it's affect on X, Y and Z.

And okay, you know, put my hand back down and now I'm back in my chair role. And so there's the impartiality but taking an impartial role does not lose you your right and as it says there is always the ISO.

At the beginning of every meeting chairs start them and say, okay does anybody have an update to their statement of interest? Sorry I probably said SOI, SOI, SOI and never said statement of interest I try to be careful about that because of the acronym things the general rules if you're speaking on first and second use try and translate the acronym.

I say first and second use I always used to say first use but then people sometimes pointed out that on first use they miss it but once they've heard the acronym once and start wondering second use will usually catch those people but I hope that answers it.

Mary Wong: Thanks Avri, Susan does that answer your question or did you have a followup and the same for Dan and Jay if you have any other questions?

Woman: I like her question about where is UK going.

((Crosstalk))

Mary Wong: So one question we couldn't answer today...

Woman: They've sort of, you know, gone down to a what's that word basically to a point, that's scary. Either that or those are two eyes of them peaking out from behind the clouds that they're usually under.

Mary Wong: That's what I was thinking, Susan I think you're typing a question about statements of interest. And Avri thanks for explaining what that is and the fact that everyone who participates in the GNSO working group does have to throw one out.

Avri Doria: Yes we should probably add it to one of the slides somewhere.

Mary Wong: Right. And Avri also I do like the comment that you made about folks basically arguing, you know, sort of with heat but at the end of the day most people do respect what one another is doing and many people all have become friends through interactions in ICANN.

And so the socializing aspect of it does humanize the whole experience.

Avri Doria: Yes I mean for example I'm in the non-commercial stakeholder group and positionally we often, you know, stand toe-to-toe with the intellectual property community.

Yet we hang out together and we go to each other parties and, you know, things like that. So, you know, we are socially friends even if we are seatedly disagreeing with each other in a meeting.

And you'll leave a meeting where people are arguing with each other and then they're immediately joking with each other and asking about, you know, families, drinks and where are you going for dinner tonight.

Mary Wong: And I see Susan has typed in her question about what to put in the SOI and Susan I think that you're speaking about that column, which asks about your affiliation and I think that's the maybe a specific issue sometimes when you're in the commercial stakeholder group, which works through it's constituencies as well as overall the stakeholder group.

That doesn't happen for example in the registrar stakeholder group where the SG is pretty much the constituency. Avri I don't know if you have a view about that I think in the non-commercial stakeholder group while the constituency work isn't as clearly defined differently as between the three constituencies and the commercial stakeholder group I don't know if you've come across this in the NCSG.

Avri Doria: Yes definitely, we have - everybody in the NCSG is a member of the NCSG and we have a flat voting structure. However we have - currently we have two constituencies we could have many every member of NCSG can be a member of up to three constituencies of course that's difficult at the moment with just two of them but if we had more they could be members.

And constituencies have different perspectives within the NCSG. So sometimes there will be a NCUC statement, sometimes there will be, which is the non-commercial user constituency, sometimes there will be a (NPOC) or the not for profit operational concerns constituency statement.

And sometimes they can't agree on a common statement so they'll make their individual statements, sometimes they can agree on a common statement and they'll be an NCSG non-commercial stakeholder group constituency.

We also leave our council members free to float their own perspectives because our perspectives within the NCSG are very diverse. So basically we leave it up to we have a monthly meeting before every council meeting where we talk about all the issues, every one that wants to voices their opinion.

And then the councilors go away and vote their conscience and then, you know, at the next meeting the assorted group will either thank them or beat them up.

Mary Wong: Thanks and on that note I go back to Susan's comment and Susan I think you raised a very interesting and perhaps a more difficult situation at least potentially than the one that I first thought about and that Avri also explained.

I think it's...

((Crosstalk))

Mary Wong: ...yes the (NTAG) the registry stakeholder group we sort of...

Avri Doria: Sort of (unintelligible).

Mary Wong: ...Avri I don't know if you agree with this comment I think Susan depending on when you go into the working group, which group you think you would be primarily advocating or representing.

I would place that or you could also put both and don't forget that you can also update your statement of interest as time goes on. So I would say I think my answer I don't know if Avri's is the same is kind of use your personal and professional judgment because that's really only something that you would know going into the working group.

And if things should change then updating your statement of interest I think would be helpful, Avri.

Avri Doria: Yes and this again depends on your working group. I tend to believe one - excuse me. One of the general notions is that a person only votes in one stakeholder group or in the case of the, you know, commercial stakeholder group in one constituency.

And for example I am a member of the NCSG and of the NCUC. I am also an observer by virtue of one of my contracts in the (NTAG) and the registry stakeholder group.

Now because I'm an observer in those I would never, you know, do more than make a casual comment. I would certainly never participate in any working group on the basis of being an observer in (NTAG) and registry.

I think my, you know, I participate either as an individual or as a member of the NCSG. And I would kind of recommend that kind of clarity on your participation.

Now even in saying that though I'm all over the place I'm also a member in the at large of the North American regional at large organization. So sometimes I participate in ALAC working group and there I participate as an (naralo) member not as a GNSO member.
So if you're participating in groups within different supporting organizations or advisory committees certainly wearing a different hat becomes reasonable. Within the other groups I would generally recommend having a consistent hat and basically keeping yourself as an observe role in one or the other would be my recommendation.

To participate in a group one day as an (NTAG) registry member and one day as an NCSG member would be incredibly confusing to the people I work with I believe. So I tend to be the NCSG person who is everywhere as opposed to, you know, being a member of (NTAG) or (CTAG), which I was also part of and (NTAG).

So my recommendation is pick one per SO or AC admit the others, put them in your SOI certainly. I believe my SOI lists my observer status' et cetera but I would behave in a working group with one primary hat but, you know, that's really up to each individual.

And it's up to the various constituencies and stakeholder groups that you're a member of if they don't mind. Certainly for example (NTAG) and registry if

you were just in those two yes, you know, they're virtually interchangeable in some sense so it's not confusion.

But, you know, and I understand that there's going to be a lot of interesting discussions here and so I hope we have them going forward because many of the dot brands and I'm sure (Validias) is involved with much of that community, will still be finished and they will be registry.

And that's one of the issues I think at the moment we're undergoing a GNSO overall review and so, you know, and that indeed may be one of the issues we tackle as it stops being a couple individuals that have these multiple locators and starts being a mass of people that have these multiple identities, multiple, you know, personae as it were.

That we have to come up with a more institutional method of dealing with it because there will be all kinds of issues of well, you know, brand X is business constituency and is registry and they have one person that's a member here and one person that's a member there do they both get a vote, does that constituent dual voting.

There are committees, there is the review committee, there is a standing committee on improvements within the GNSO that spends all of their time talking about these issues. And so if you get involve din the GNSO and you are a process freak then there's a group for that too.\

Mary Wong: Thanks Avri and yes so Susan I'm glad you raised that because structurally that is an issue that the GNSO will be dealing with I think for the time being for working groups as Avri says I guess if you pick one and like we both said put that in the SOI and be clear and I suppose consistent in representing whichever group that might be.

I think one thing I did want to add on and I did note that we probably need to wrap up is that one difference between the working groups and the council

and I think that was at least implicit and some of what Avri was saying is that for a working group the idea is to come to a consensus and I know you spoke about the different consensus levels Avri.

And in coming to consensus working groups generally do not vote in any sort of formal sense so it's a member of the working group at some point as Avri mentioned the chair will try to determine the levels of consensus for particular proposals.

That is rarely done by a formal counting of the votes it's really done through exhausted discussion and folks coming to agreement or agreeing to disagree. In terms of formal voting that normally happens at the council level.

In terms of voting on working group recommendations what a lot of working groups do is after the group has reached either consensus or whatever level that might be on their proposal a formal consensus call can go out to all the respective constituencies and stakeholder groups including and especially perhaps those that were not fully represented in the working group.

So in that sense while you or anyone else might be representing a constituency or stakeholder group in the working group there always is opportunity to get views from the entire GNSO in the beginning of the process and certainly before the recommendations are adopted.

And the other thing I would say is that one innovation well, you know, we call it innovation but I should say incremental step is that for GNSO working groups traditionally most folks were expected to be full members and do all the things Avri mentioned.

You know, follow the recordings, participate in discussions and so forth but recognizing that this is a volunteer community, recognizing the spread of work and interest it is possible to join a working group first as an observer, which means you track the mailing list but you don't, you know, you don't actually have rights.

And I use that word, you know, in comment - in a comment to participate and take part in the discussions. So sometimes for newer folks or folks who are uncertain how or where they might represent the groups they're with that may be a good way to start.

And I was going to ask folks to think about final questions while giving Avri the last word perhaps on this point, Avri.

Avri Doria: Yes and I actually put up my hand on this one because I think it's in most all groups observers have full right of participation except perhaps for participating in a consensus.

And, you know, very often when you're dealing with consensus it's speaking that counts more than, you know, are you one of the folks that has to agree. So while I'm not sure and I have to admit ignorance I was surprised that observers in a working group weren't required to do an SOI.

And I haven't had a chance and look up the rules on it but my expectation would be that even observers should have filed an SOI since they are free to speak. Obviously somebody just reading the archive and listening to the recordings as an external observer is - doesn't need an SOI.

But if you join a, you know, working group list and you participate in the phone calls at all then I would really recommend doing an SOI. I'm not sure that there's a rule that requires it I have to check that, you know, I've added it to my list I'm one of the group of policy geeks.

So I'll have to go back and see whether there is anything I just don't remember but my assumption is that from a guidance point of view from a guideline point of view I think it's best for every participant whether observer or active participant to have an SOI.

Mary Wong: Avri and I could not quote chapter and verse to you probably because this is so new I do believe and it certainly is practiced and it may actually be a requirement we just implemented this and we do ask all participants to send an SOI including observers.

What we then do is that in listing the participants of a working group say on the groups Wiki space we indicate who is a member and who is an observer. So certainly as a matter of practice I think that's what we do and I've just been nudged by the secretary to tell me actually no that's standard.

So I - we're doing what's standard so it may be that for observers who are new it does take them a while to send in an SOI but we are hopeful that that will be something everyone does quickly when they join a working group.

And I think that goes to the point that I think you are alluding to because then everyone knows who is on the mailing list and what their status is and what their capacity is.

So certainly if an observer doesn't fill in an SOI I'm not sure that there's any consequence but should that person wish to then become a member definitely they would need an SOI and like I said we have asked everyone who has signed up and we just implemented this like less than a month ago whether it's a member or observer to send in an SOI anyway.

So we can probably discuss this further but hopefully that's - Glen has just confirmed that in the chat and so hopefully this is one way for folks who are newer whether it's folks on this Webinar or people that you work with that you know if by time or information you don't want to jump head on into a working group this may be one way to test the waters.

So at this point I see that we've run over our time and thank you so much for your questions and thank you Avri for great presentation and really some very insightful responses.

If anyone has additional questions going once, twice.

Avri Doria: Okay thank you all and have pleasant rest of the days or nights or weeks or months and I hope to see you around.

Mary Wong: And I very much hope to see all of you in one or more working groups and certainly contributing to the work of the GNSO. Thank you all very much for attending this Webinar and please as we've said feel free to contact any of us with any questions at any time.

Thank you again Avri, thank you Glen, thank you Nathalie and thank you everyone and I think Nathalie we can stop the recording.

Woman: Thank you very much Nathalie could please stop the recording this call is now closed.

END